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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003394

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/17/2015

TAGS: PTER PGOV PREL TU IZ

SUBJECT: TURKEY'S AMBASSADOR CEVIKOZ: WE SHARE YOUR GOALS
FOR IRAQ

REF: A. ANKARA 3388

1B. BAGHDAD 3201

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C//REL AUS,GB) Turkish Ambassador Unal Cevikoz opened his August 11 courtesy call on the Ambassador with a reaffirmation of his government's commitment to the Coalition's political goals for Iraq. "We support the political process," he said, "We're in the same boat as you."

He regretted Turkey's non-participation in the military campaign "because of past events that should be forgotten," but renewed his government's offer to the Coalition of access to Turkey's extensive Sunni contacts so as to advance sectarian reconciliation. The ultimate motivation for Turkey's positive contribution in Iraq, he implied, is his government's desire to maintain the best possible relationship with the United States.

12. (C//REL AUS,GB) Noting the Turkish people's frustration with the continued presence of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq, Cevikoz requested the Ambassador's support in eliminating the terrorist group's safe haven. The Ambassador said American military forces are currently fully engaged in the counter-insurgency campaign; however, he will continue to press the Iraqi government and the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) towards action against the PKK.

13. (C//REL AUS,GB) Cevikoz questioned Iraqi interest in curbing the PKK. He complained the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) had sent a "weak delegation" to early August tri-lateral talks in Washington (Note: Cevikoz's criticism is unfair. The Turks had agreed to a technical-level meeting limited to a discussion of extradition procedures.) He alleged that a senior PKK member had recently met with KRG President Barzani and another had been present at the opening of the Kurdish parliament. He disputed FM Zebari's recent assertion that the bilateral relationship is without serious disagreement. Cevikoz even mistakenly complained of a lack of Iraqi responsiveness to Turkey's request to extradite two detained Turks suspected of involvement in the 2003 Islamist bombing of Britain's Istanbul consulate. (REF B)

14. (C//REL AUS,GB) The Ambassador pledged to incorporate Turkey's security concerns into his regular dialogue with ITG and KRG officials and to report back to Cevikoz on his communications.

Khalilzad